

**TOWN OF SHELBURNE
BOARD OF ABATEMENT
MINUTES OF MEETING
April 12, 2021**

***Meeting held by teleconference.**

DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Webster (Chair); Peter Gadue, Lee Suskin, Jennifer Leopold, Nancy Baker, Bill Deming, Rebecca Moore, Laura Gannon-Murakami, Joan Lenes, Randy Rowland, Susan Bowen, Judy Rosenstreich, Denis Barton, Luce Hillman.

ADMINISTRATION: Diana Vachon, Town Clerk; Linda Barker, Treasurer.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Clerk of the Board, Diana Vachon, read a portion of Act 92 relative to remote meetings.

David Webster, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7 PM and explained the procedure to be followed. There was discussion of rules of conduct for the Board which include:

- Attend the meetings
- Turn off cellphone, reduce distractions
- Identify yourself when speaking
- Speak after being recognized by the Chair
- Be an active listener
- Be concise
- Add new information
- Remain non-partisan, neutral, objective
- Maintain confidentiality
- Keep in mind that tax appeals are from residents of the town and the Board is to serve both the town and the residents
- Roberts Rules for meetings will be followed

2. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

4. MINUTES

February 8, 2021

MOTION by Joan Lenes, **SECOND** by Laura Gannon-Murakami, to approve the minutes of 2/8/21 as presented. **VOTING** by rollcall: unanimous; motion carried.

5. SUBCOMMITTEE TO CREATE MEETING PROTOCOL

6. LIST OF DOCUMENTATION FOR ABATEMENT WHEN UNABLE TO PAY TAXES

Diana Vachon reported the town can determine what information is wanted from an appellant in order to abate taxes. The appellant needs to understand they have the burden of proof and should submit information that will help the Board make a decision. Any information that is provided becomes public record. The town should also submit information and the tax collector should attend each appeal hearing. The role of the town to help should be made known and appellants directed to appropriate social services.

David Webster read comments from the Secretary of Sate on abatement of taxes and the advice that the Board should think in terms of a temporary solution when requesting supporting materials from the appellant. The material requested should be germane to the decision. The following list of information that the appellant should submit was compiled:

- The form from the state to request property tax relief
- HI-144 form (part of Vermont tax return)
- List of assets and liabilities
- Monthly expenses and income
- Number of dependents
- Explanation of why not being able to pay taxes is a temporary situation
- List of other relief that has been sought or other agencies contacted for assistance

Nancy Baker, Rebecca Moore, Randy Rowland, Lee Suskin, Laura Gannon-Murakami, Joan Lenes, Bill Deming, and Linda Baker volunteered to serve on the subcommittee to create meeting protocol. The charge of the subcommittee is to create a list of documents that should be submitted by the appellant to meet the burden of proof. All documents will be public record. It was suggested the list of documents be inserted into the Rules of Procedure for the Board.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Cate Cross Position on Board of Abatement

It was suggested that Cate Cross resign her position on the Board since as a Selectboard member she already is on the board. Mike Donohue should be re-installed. Following discussion, the Board did not take a position on the matter.

Memorial for George Schiavone

May 22, 2021 at 11 AM.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Nancy Baker, **SECOND** by Rebecca Moore, to adjourn the meeting.
VOTING by rollcall: unanimous; motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM.

RScy: MERiordan